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Independent

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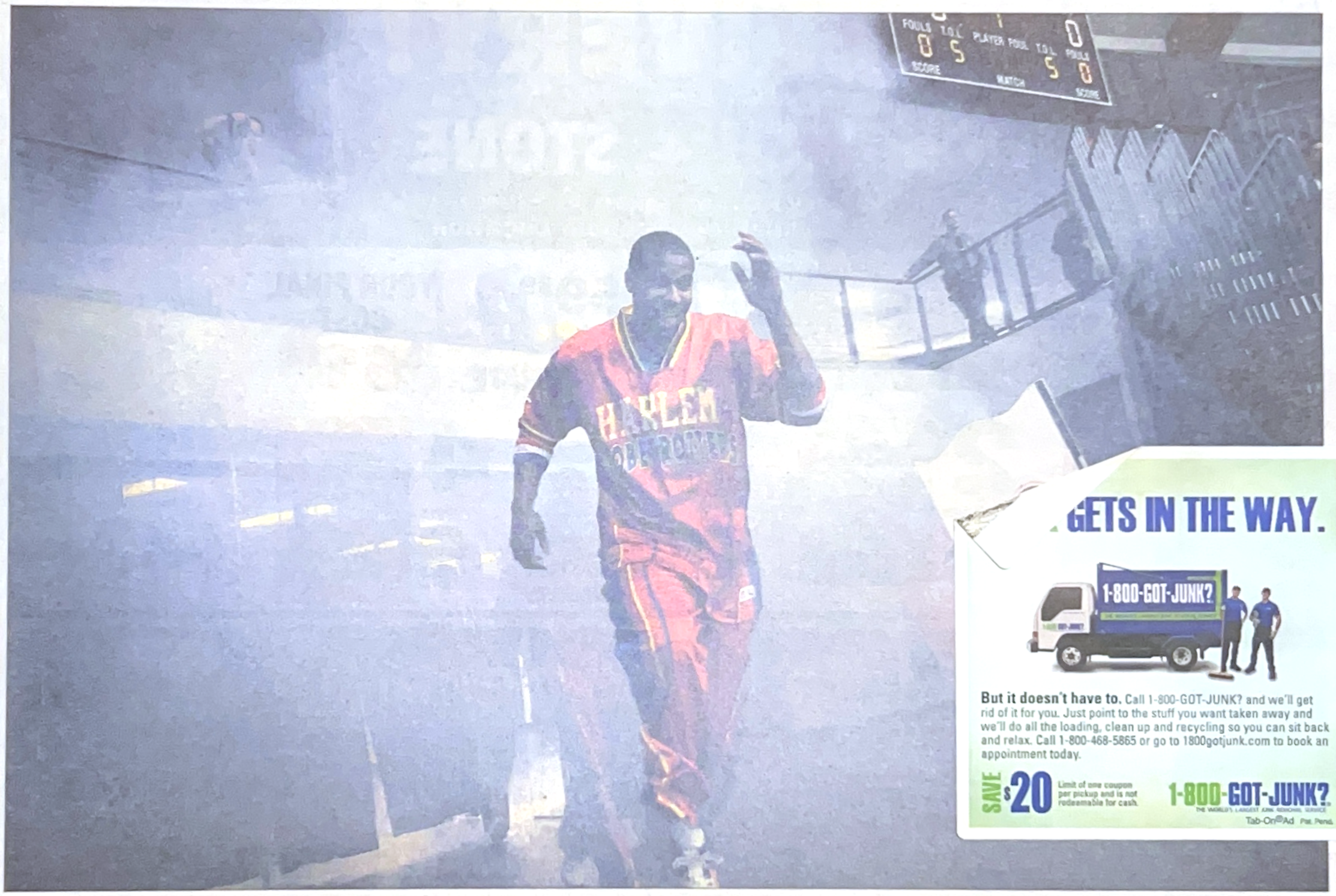

ERIC SUCAR staff

A member of the Harlem Globetrotters is introduced during the "Magicians of Basketball" world tour performance in the Collins Arena at Brookdale Community College, Lincroft, March 16. More photos, page 32 and gmnews.com.

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No tax increase in $50.7M Holmdel school budget

BY JACQUELINE HLAVENKA
Staff Writer

The Holmdel Board of Education proposed a zero percent tax levy increase for the 2011-12 school budget during its State of the District presentation March 16.

After the board passed a tentative $50.9 million spending plan March 2, the district reduced the budget to $50.7 million last week by providing an additional savings of $149,964.

The 2011-12 general fund budget as introduced calls for a tax levy of $47,180,371.

"The budget that we will be proposing and talking about will have a flat tax levy, which will remain $47,180,000," Business Administrator Michael Petrizzo said. "As we have spoken about at our previous meetings, we did receive some state aid that has been restored and we will utilize that money to go right back to tax relief."

Petrizzo said several factors contributed to the flat tax levy, including $508,703 in restored state aid, favorable personnel contract negotiations with the Holmdel Township Education Association (HTEA), and continued energy efficiencies.

(Continued on page 13)

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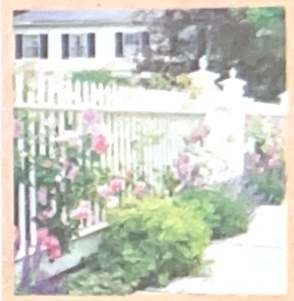

Spring Home & Garden

Warmer weather means it's time to spruce up your house.

See Inside

Down the shore

Don't wait for the summer to head down to the shore. There are things to do right now.

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I know this is a bitter pill, but I think we cannot continue to be fighting our own Township Committee. These are real difficult times and I think we just have to move forward."

— Middletown Township Public Library trustee Vivian Breen
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A Greater Media Newspaper

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BY ANDREW DA
Staff Writer

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Shore musician finds his hero

'Jerseyboy Hero' premieres April 7 in Red Bank

BY ANDREW DAVISON
Staff Writer

For Red Bank musician Chris Vaughn, making music was the easy part. But getting it out there would require the help of one of his idols.

Vaughn chronicled his musical journey along the Jersey Shore in his narrative documentary "Jerseyboy Hero," to premiere in Red Bank on April 7.

"It's a documentary about a local New Jersey musician trying to get his music made and into the hands of one of his two biggest hometown heroes, [Bruce] Springsteen or [Jon] Bon Jovi," Vaughn explained.

"It's about seeing which local legend would help out a Jersey boy."

Vaughn said that he had four goals: to record a debut album; get that music to Bon Jovi or Springsteen; and finish a film about his quest and distribute it.

"I've gotten three out of four," he said, adding that the Red Bank premiere at Clearview Cinema is part of that final goal.

Vaughn said he made the film as a creative approach to the challenges record labels and aspiring musicians face.

Due to the Internet's rise and the paradigm shift currently facing the music industry, labels no longer have promotional budgets.

"Unless you develop your own [fan] base and following," Vaughn said, record companies are not interested.

"They don't have the funds to get into the radio, TV, film and print marketing without a huge budget."

Vaughn said that he also noticed the popularity of reality TV.

"I saw a trend in people being really interested in a story," he said, referencing shows like "American Idol," where contestants often share biographical stories.

"They always want to know the story, so I thought it would be an interesting approach to document the journey," Vaughn said.

"I figured 'Hey, [Springsteen and Bon Jovi] are both right here, it's worth a shot.'

"I couldn't believe nobody had thought of it yet."

The West Long Branch native's primary background is in music, so Vaughn had to teach himself film techniques and video editing.

Vaughn said his friends played a huge part, providing help and financial assistance when necessary.

"People helped me out. I got it done with my friends' help, and here we are," Vaughn said.

Vaughn, who sings and plays guitar, said his music has been described as radio rock, hard rock, alternative rock, grunge rock, and pop rock.

"I just call it rock," he said.

Ultimately, Vaughn did meet Springsteen and enlisted his help.

"It's really not a big secret who's in it," Vaughn said, "All it would take is one Internet search [to find out]."

"The way it came about was a mystical experience."

According to Vaughn, he had accepted that he was not going to meet either musician and had begun filming the end of the movie.

However, he stumbled on a last chance while performing in Asbury Park.

"By some miracle, [Springsteen] was practicing across the street," he said, and after some encouragement, Vaughn gave it one more shot

"In my head, it was over, and then we go and actually get him," he said.

Vaughn said that Springsteen came back later to finish filming and sit down for a drink with him.

"He's just a real person; [success] didn't go to his head," he said.

Vaughn said that making the film was an extraordinary experience.

"It was really difficult at times, and there's a lot of things that I would do differently, but I learned a ton," he said.

"I learned so much about how to make music and make an album."

Beyond creating the film, Vaughn scored it, appropriately, with all his own music.

"It's a story of self-reliance and coming from nothing and working toward your goal," he said.

Vaughn said that everyone he encountered in the area during the four-year process was eager to help and support him.

"Everybody is pretty community oriented in this area," he said.

"Jerseyboy Hero" will premiere at 8 p.m. April 7 at Clearview Red Bank Art Cinemas, 36 White St. Tickets are available at www.jerseyboyhero.com.

Chris Vaughn set out to promote his music and found an ally in rock icon Bruce Springsteen.